

October, 2009

## **Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

### District Responsibilities

1. Designate a homeless liaison. In addition to the liaison, each building could have a “homeless contact” person.
2. Identify and immediately enroll a homeless child or youth, even if medical and academic records are not available.
3. Continue a homeless child or youth in their “school of origin” for the duration of their homelessness. (School of origin is defined as the school attended when permanently housed or the school last enrolled.)
  - Follow “best interest” provisions when making placement decisions.
  - At the request of the parent/guardian, keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin.
4. If the parent/guardian requests it, transportation must be provided for homeless children and youth to the student’s school of origin for the duration of homelessness, following “best interest” provisions.
  - If the student remains in the school district, the district is responsible for transportation.
  - If the homeless student begins living in an area served by another school district, the two school districts need to agree on how transportation costs will be shared. If they can’t agree, costs will be shared equally.
  - Transportation disputes should be referred to the homeless liaison for resolution.
  - If the district administers a preschool program and provides transportation, transportation should be provided to preschool children who become homeless.
5. Ensure district policies and procedures do not serve as educational “barriers” for homeless children and youth.
6. Ensure the district’s grievance policy includes homeless issues; make sure of short timeframes for swift resolution.
7. Develop “partnerships” with school and community agency staff to identify and serve homeless students, including preschool children and unaccompanied youth.

### Homeless Liaison

Ensure that homeless children and youth (including preschool children and unaccompanied youth):

- are identified and enrolled through coordination with school staff and community agencies,
- are not segregated or stigmatized, and
- obtain comparable services and have equal opportunity to be successful in school.

Inform homeless parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth of:

- available educational opportunities,
- enrollment and transportation rights,
- the right to appeal enrollment and transportation decisions,
- meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their child, and
- availability of community health and social service programs.

Assist homeless parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth by:

- obtaining medical and academic records for school enrollment,
- securing preschool placement for their young children,
- mediating enrollment, transportation, and educational services disputes,

- providing a directory of community services
- verifying eligibility for participation in food and nutritional programs.

Partner with schools and community agencies:

- to inform them of the educational rights of homeless children and youth through training/in-services, and
- to develop release of information forms with for reciprocal referrals.